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MEMORANDUM

To: Ms. Robin Desmond, Chief Academic Officer, Lowell Public Schools
Fr: Jessica Daviso, Fine Art Department Chair & K-12 Arts Curriculum, Lowell Public Schools Cc: Mr. Michael Fiato, Head of School, Lowell High School; Jill Rothschild, Associate Head of School, Lowell High School; Stephanie Selvaggio, Academic Department Chair of Science and Health, Lowell High School
Re: LHS Performing Arts Wellness Program

Background

Current graduation requirements for Lowell High School students, as per the 2021-2022 Student Handbook, require that students:

"Must select Physical Education each year and pass four (4) semesters in Physical Education for (10) credits. AFJROTC, Dance, Band, or Show Choir may be substituted each year for this requirement."

In addition, students:

"Must select Health Education A in the ninth (9th) grade and Health Education B in the tenth (10th) grade. Both health courses (2.5 credits each) must be passed for a total of five (5) credits. AFJROTC may be substituted each year for this requirement."

In order to better align the LHS graduation requirements to the forthcoming revised Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Framework, which places a greater emphasis on health as a form of personal wellness, this memorandum requests that the School Committee allow all PE-equivalent classes to fulfill the Health A and Health B requirements. As such, AFJROTC, Dance, Band, or Show Choir could be taken to meet this requirement. This change provides a benefit to all affected academic departments, providing opportunities for increased Fine Arts enrollment and program retention while decreasing oversubscribed Health classes.

Additionally, these changes mark Lowell High School's first step in revisiting graduation requirements in efforts to improve our MassCore Graduation completion rates.

The document enclosed outlines how performing arts classes, through the implementation of a wellness curriculum, will successfully meet the requirements of Health A and Health B, as per the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework.

Enclosures:

1. LHS Wellness Curriculum - Performing Arts Focus
2. Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework ([here](#))
3. AFJROTC Wellness Curriculum ([here](#))

LHS Wellness Curriculum - Performing Arts Focus

Overview

The LHS Performing Arts Wellness Program is designed to teach students content and skills to create and maintain healthy, active lifestyles. Through this course of study, students will explore the development and function of the human body; the principles of human movement; and the application of health and fitness concepts in daily life - all through the lens of performing arts content areas, like dance, show choir, and marching band.

Students will work towards developing mastery of physical skills through codified dance choreography and marching band techniques. In the process, students will learn goal setting and risk assessment in order to make positive decisions around health and wellness issues. By exploring health and wellness through the real-world applications of dance and marching band, students will gain a deep understanding of how overall wellness is an important part of their everyday lives. Through these courses of study, students will experience the ways health and wellness bridge academic content areas and how these topics are especially important to success in the performing arts.

The LHS Performing Arts Wellness Program will provide students with a collaborative and active pathway to meet the Health requirement for high school graduation. Working together in small group situations to promote collaboration, communication, and decision-making, students will learn acceptance and appreciation of the range of individual abilities and group dynamics. The LHS Performing Arts Wellness Program has a focus on balancing personal well-being (physical, social, emotional, intellectual, occupational, leisure) to guide students to assess their current skill levels and set goals for improvement.

The objective of the Performing Arts Wellness Program is to:

Encourage, educate, and motivate students to create and maintain active and healthy lifestyles while identifying their personal roles and responsibilities in the ongoing pursuit of maintaining healthy physical and emotional habits.

Essential Questions:

How does physical and emotional wellness affect my quality of life?

Why and how is fitness important across all stages of life?

How can goal setting enhance and improve my health?

How can I promote accurate health information and behavior for myself and others?

How can communication enhance my personal health while developing positive relationships?

How does an individual's unique talents contribute to the larger community?

How are health and wellness integral to the success of the performing arts?

LHS Performing Arts Wellness Program At-a-Glance

STRAND	OVERARCHING /GENERAL THEMES	STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
PHYSICAL FITNESS	UNIT CONCEPTS	To demonstrate proficiency by the end of the course, Students Will...
Physical activity provides a variety of opportunities for enjoyment, social interaction, challenge, and/or self-expression	Movement Skills and Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Demonstrate mastery of all locomotor skills needed to participate in an elected physical activity● Demonstrate mastery of all non-locomotor skills needed to participate in an elected physical activity● Demonstrate mastery of all manipulative skills needed to participate in an elective physical activity● Demonstrate the ability to apply manipulative skills competently in an elected physical activity● Analyze movement skill cues and use them to enhance performance● Analyze the biomechanics of movement skills within an elected physical activity● Demonstrate ability to apply content knowledge, such as rules, roles and strategies to an elected physical activity
Physical fitness is essential to health throughout a lifetime	Health-Related Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Develop, implement and monitor an individualized fitness plan based on goals● Analyze community fitness facilities based on given criteria● Create and lead a health-related fitness routine that can be applied independently or as a group● Assess how personal needs are met, such as wellness, enjoyment, challenge, social interactions, etc, during an elected fitness course or activity
Communication can enhance personal health and promote positive relationships.	Personal & Social Skills Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Demonstrate respect for self and others in all settings● Design a cooperative activity game or activity for a group to implement● Analyze and utilize the strengths of others in a physical activity setting● Participate willingly with all individuals and groups in cooperative activities● Analyze how cooperative, problem solving and inclusion skills contribute to life outside of school

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate effective ways to communicate personal boundaries
Physical and emotional wellness affect my quality of life.	Overall Wellness (Health and Physical Education Hybrid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate the ability to use the decision-making skills of appropriate goal-setting, risk taking and problem solving ● Formulate an effective long-term personal fitness plan that incorporates daily physical activity and healthy eating habits ● Demonstrate the ability to access reliable and valid information related to personal health and wellness ● Choose the healthier option when dealing with stress and evaluate the effectiveness of that decision
Healthy foods along with exercise affect my overall health and a positive body image.	Resources and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify resources for adolescents to pursue nutrition in healthy ways, including eating patterns and positive body image ● Assess one's personal preferences regarding healthy eating and physical activity ● Assess personal barriers to healthy eating and physical activity ● Develop a personal plan for improving nutrition and increasing physical activities that reduce the risk of disease
SOCIAL/ EMOTIONAL HEALTH	UNIT CONCEPTS	To demonstrate proficiency by the end of the course, Students Will...
Strategies for managing stress help me make me to have a better quality of life	SEL Skills: Self-awareness, Social relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify how to recognize stress and describe strategies for managing stress ● Assess personal ability to manage stress, including anger management ● Advocate for improving personal, family and community skills in managing stress ● Describe warning signs and risk factors of destructive behavior ● Evaluate the effectiveness of different responses when dealing with other's emotions
Understanding mental health disorders can help me advocate for myself and others.	SEL skills: Self Management and Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Find reliable resources including online, school and community that provide valid information about mental and emotional health and wellbeing ● Identify common mental health disorders and appropriate treatments available in the community ● Demonstrate what to ask when seeking medical advice and/or services ● Determine when professional medical advice and/or

		services may be required
COMMUNITY HEALTH	UNIT CONCEPTS	To demonstrate proficiency by the end of the course, Students Will...
The health of the entire community is essential to maintaining a healthy lifestyle	Community Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Identify health disparities in your community ●Advocate for improving personal, family and community health and removing health disparities ●Examine barriers to healthy decision-making with regard to environmental issues ●Predict possible short and long term impact of alternative sources of energy at the community and national level
SAFETY	UNIT CONCEPTS	To demonstrate proficiency by the end of the course, Students Will...
Personal safety is essential to maintaining a healthy lifestyle	Injury prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Explain the safety risks associated with given physical activities ●Define physiology and identify basic physiological concepts that apply to training ●Explain the safety risks associated with given physical activities ●Analyze the biomechanics of movement skills within an elected physical activity
TOBACCO, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL	UNIT CONCEPTS	To demonstrate proficiency by the end of the course, Students Will...
Tobacco, drugs, and alcohol impede one's ability to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle	Resources: Nurse Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Analyze internal and external influences that affect our decisions about using tobacco, alcohol and other drugs ●Advocate for ways young people can promote a drug-free environment ●Demonstrate skills to avoid tobacco exposure and resist using alcohol, tobacco or other drugs ●Apply strategies to accept services and get help for self or others
REPRODUCTION & SEXUALITY	UNIT CONCEPTS	<p>***This stand will be delivered to students through Healthy Futures, an LPS community partner. More information available here.</p> <p>To demonstrate proficiency by the end of the course, Students Will...</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Identify the stages of the male and female reproductive systems over the life cycle ●List the signs of pregnancy ●Describe the effectiveness and consequences of various pregnancy, HIV, and STI prevention methods, including

		<p>abstinence Students identify ways to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Identify possible determinants of sexual orientation and analyze the weight of each in light of available research ●Explain the importance of examination of both genders for HIV and STIs before conception and the risks and precautions of delivery when HIV and STIs are present ●Describe proper prenatal care and identify types of birth defects ●Explain the importance of communication and setting limits in a sexual relationship ●Identify and distinguish among types and degrees of sexual risk (pregnancy, sexual assault, STIs, including HIV/AIDS) ●Evaluate the impact of HIV/AIDS on the community, medical resources, and family
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Sample Content & Lesson Units

PHYSICAL HEALTH

The following is a brief description of physical movement used in performing arts classes. This foundation helps to build and implement a broad range of physical fitness understanding that promotes lifelong fitness. These lessons/workouts are used throughout the entire semester.

Curated Warm Ups

Cardiovascular Workouts

Strength-based Workouts

Flexibility/Stretch Lessons

Jazz/Modern/Ballet Movement

Emphasis on proper technique and form

Cool downs

Somatic Techniques - Yoga/Pilates/Alexander

Key Dance Movements for Maintaining Fitness:

- Roll Downs
- Flat Backs
- Plie
- Isolation
- Releve
- Swings

Stretches

- Butterfly
- Pigeon
- Lunge
- Split
- Center Split
- Lateral Side Stretch
- Downward Dog
- Child's Pose
- Arch
- Locomotor Movement Exercises
 - Grapevine
 - Chasse Ball/Change
 - 3-Step Turn
 - Jumping
 - Leaping
 - Running
 - Walking
 - Sliding

Key Exercises for Maintaining Fitness:

- Squats
- Lunges
- Planks
- Lateral Jumps
- Sit Ups
- Push Ups

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

The following is a brief description of social-emotional/mental health issues and lessons addressed in performing arts classes.

Peer Collaboration

- Group Projects
- Paired Activities
- Promoting communication and understanding
- Emphasizing acceptance and understanding of others
- Communicating boundaries
- Teacher and Student led Group Discussions

Social Issue Dance Project

- Identify mental health/social issues high school students face
- Educate students on these issues and provide support
- Create and perform a movement phrase demonstrating a social issue identified in class
- Provide feedback for choreography/dancers

Teacher/Student Check-ins

Goal Setting

Assessing Risks

Guided Meditation

Breath Exercises

Yoga

SAFETY & PREVENTION

Safety & Injury Prevention Lessons

- Emphasizing and demonstrating the importance of warm-up before attempting larger physical movements
- Creating strength in specific muscles before attempting advance movements
- Rehabilitation education

Social Issue Dance Project

- Addressing substance abuse, violence, and safety

PERSONAL & COMMUNITY HEALTH

GO GREEN Dance Project

- Emphasis on choreographic patterns and recycle/reuse themes

Nutrition & Nourishment

- Living a healthy lifestyle and promoting correct nutrition for active performers

